

### **In the Claims**

Please amend Claims 1, 2 and 12, and add new Claims 13-20 as shown in the following listing.

1 1. (Currently Amended). A fitting for releasably connecting a first tube end to a second tube end  
2 in a substantially coaxial, end-to-end orientation, wherein said second tube end has an outer diameter  
3 within a specified range, said fitting comprises:

4 a slightly resilient collar having a plurality of inwardly projecting prominences;

5 said first tube end having a sidewall and a plurality of holes therethrough;

6 said holes sized, shaped and located to allow passage of said prominences therethrough to  
7 contact an outer surface of said second tube end;

8 wherein said collar has a medial bulge in thickness yielding an axially variable resiliency.

1 2. (Currently Amended). ~~The fitting of Claim 1;~~ A fitting for releasably connecting a first tube end  
2 to a second tube end in a substantially coaxial, end-to-end orientation, wherein said second tube end  
3 has an outer diameter within a specified range, said fitting comprises:

4 a slightly resilient collar having a plurality of inwardly projecting prominences;

5 said first tube end having a sidewall and a plurality of holes therethrough;

6 said holes sized, shaped and located to allow passage of said prominences therethrough to  
7 contact an outer surface of said second tube end;

8 wherein said collar has an axially variable resiliency; and,

9 wherein a first one of said prominences is shaped to have a tapered inner surface.

1 3. (Previously Presented). A fitting for releasably connecting a first tube end to a second tube end  
2 in a substantially coaxial, end-to-end orientation, wherein said second tube end has an outer diameter  
3 within a specified range, said fitting comprises:

4 a resilient clamping structure having a plurality of inwardly projecting prominences;  
5 said first tube end having a sidewall and a plurality of holes therethrough;  
6 said holes sized, shaped and located to allow passage of said prominences therethrough to  
7 contact an outer surface of said second tube end;  
8 wherein a first one of said prominences is shaped to have a tapered inner surface; and  
9 said tapered inner surface has an upper portion and an adjacent lower portion wherein said  
10 upper portion is more outwardly located than said lower portion.

1 4. (Original). The fitting of Claim 1, wherein said clamping structure further comprises a  
2 sleeve-shaped body.

1 5. (Original). The fitting of Claim 1, wherein said prominences are evenly spaced apart.

1 6. (Canceled).

1 7. (Original). The fitting of Claim 1, wherein there are at least six prominences.

1 8. (Original). The fitting of Claim 1, wherein said clamping structure is axially symmetric.

1 9. (Previously Presented). The fitting of Claim 2, wherein said clamping structure is formed from  
2 an integrated collar made from a resilient material.

1 10. (Original). The fitting of Claim 1, wherein said prominences are biased radially inwardly.

1 11. (Canceled).

1 12. (Currently Amended). An auto-adapting fitting for releasably connecting in a substantially  
2 coaxial, end-to-end orientation, a first tube end to a second tube end where said second tube end has  
3 an outer diameter within a specified range, said fitting comprises:

4 a tubular feed port having a first axial opening;

5 said port being shaped to have a plurality of apertures extending radially through said  
6 side wall proximate to said opening; and

7 a slightly resilient annular retaining ring circumferentially mounted to said outer wall,  
8 said ring having a plurality of friction prominences penetrating through said aperture into said port;

9 wherein ~~each of said prominences comprises an axially medial hump~~ said ring has  
10 a medial bulge in thickness yielding an axially variable resiliency.

1 13. (New). The fitting of Claim 2, wherein said prominences are evenly spaced apart.

1 14. (New). The fitting of Claim 2, wherein there are at least six prominences.

- 1      15. (New). The fitting of Claim 2, wherein said collar is axially symmetric.
- 1      16. (New). The fitting of Claim 2, wherein said prominences are biased radially inwardly.
- 1      17. (New). The fitting of Claim 12, wherein said prominences are evenly spaced apart.
- 1      18. (New). The fitting of Claim 12, wherein there are at least six prominences.
- 1      19. (New). The fitting of Claim 12, wherein said ring is axially symmetric.
- 1      20. (New). The fitting of Claim 12, wherein said prominences are biased radially inwardly.